

# CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION ENSURES A COMPETITIVE AND SUCCESSFUL WORKFORCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I serve as cochairman of the Congressional Career and Technical Education Caucus with my friend and colleague JIM LANGEVIN of Rhode Island. The Career and Technical Education Caucus is a group of Members seeking to broaden awareness here on Capitol Hill of the importance of career and technical education.

I take the floor today to offer yet another example of the critical role that career and technical education plays in helping individuals remain competitive in a constantly changing workforce environment.

On June 7, 2011, history was made at the Central Pennsylvania Institute of Science and Technology. Two young ladies, Anna Krishak and Tricia Reich, graduated from their automotive technology program at the highest level possible offered by CPI. These non-traditional students in the automotive technology program earned their diploma along with State, national, and world certifications in their field of study.

The most amazing part about their accomplishments was their path to success. Anna had only one year in the automotive technology program. She quickly earned the respect of her instructor, met the qualifications of CPI's school-to-work cooperative education program, and became employed at a local car dealership just shortly after the school year began. Despite absences due to a medical condition, Tricia completed all of her assignments and exceeded almost all other classmates. Tricia became eligible for CPI's cooperative education program and also later was employed at a local car dealership.

In the process, both young ladies received college credit that can be transferred to many colleges and universities in the United States. In addition, both Anna and Tricia completed evening certification courses geared towards enhancing their education, which ensured a successful career path. Despite tough economic times, Tricia and Anna have found a way to make ends meet. They have broadened their horizons and found their own competitive advantage in the marketplace, despite an ever-changing economy.

This story serves as a reminder for my fellow Members, a reminder that career and technical education programs exist in every congressional district. This also reminds us of how career and technical education can be utilized to assure a competitive and successful workforce.

On behalf of the Career and Technical Education Caucus, I want to congratulate these outstanding young ladies for their achievements.

# DRAWING DOWN AMERICAN TROOPS FROM AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, it is now mid-June and we are just weeks away from the July date the President promised for a drawdown of American troops from Afghanistan. But so far, so far, there appears to be little movement towards the kind of redeployment that the moment actually calls for and that the American people are insisting on.

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In fact, Mr. Speaker, Defense Secretary Gates, on his way out the door, endorsed a "modest" drawdown, even though the President has promised something significant. This is not a moment that calls for modesty. This is a moment for boldness and true leadership. This is a moment to break out of the war default posture—the posture that we've been in for going on 10 years now.

The longer this war goes on, the bloodier it becomes. We were told last year that fatalities would be unusually high in 2010 as the surge troops begin penetrating the Taliban strongholds. But it turns out there's no sign that casualties are tapering off, and we're on pace for an equally deadly 2011. We lost more troops in March, April, and May of this year than we did during the same months of 2010.

And let's not forget—because I don't think it's talked about nearly enough—that it's not just uniformed members of the U.S. military being put in harm's way by this conflict. The United Nations said over the weekend that there were more civilian casualties in May than in any single other month of this war. Needless to say, killing innocent people is certainly not the way to win the hearts and minds of another country.

The American people's patience is wearing thin, Mr. Speaker; and there are many Members of this body—a fair number in the Republican majority—who cannot support this Afghanistan policy either. I for one am tired of being told that the strategy is working and it just needs more time to succeed. How many military families will lose a father or a mother or a son or a daughter in the time it takes for this strategy to go nowhere? How many troops will be physically and psychologically damaged beyond repair?

Mr. Speaker, I think nearly a decade—longer than any war in American history—is more than enough time to admit that the strategy does not work. We don't need simply a token drawdown. We need a fundamental change in policy and a complete reorientation of our thinking about national security. We need to finally end this war and bring our troops home.

# WATAUGA HIGH SCHOOL PROSTART PROGRAM IS EXAMPLE OF INNOVATION DONE RIGHT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Today, I want to highlight a remarkable group of North Carolina students from Watauga High School in my district. These students recently competed and won third place in the National ProStart Invitational in Overland Park, Kansas, after winning first place in the Carolinas' ProStart competition earlier this year. They are to be congratulated for this fantastic achievement, and I commend everyone from the parents and students to the teachers and mentors involved in this innovative educational program.

ProStart is a nationwide, 2-year program for high school students that seeks to develop the next generation of restaurant and foodservice industry leaders. Students participating in the program learn everything from culinary techniques to management skills via a hands-on curriculum and real-world educational opportunities. By building practical professional skills, these students are investing in their future careers even while enrolled in high school.

What's particularly impressive about this program is how it combines traditional high school programs with instruction from seasoned professionals in the foodservice and hospitality fields. This program is a wonderful model for how private sector companies can work with schools and students to offer tailor-made educational solutions that set students on the road to successful careers. In fact, in North Carolina alone, the ProStart program has educated more than 700 students in 15 schools, with another 13 North Carolina schools set to join in the next year. Again, congratulations to everyone involved in Watauga High School's ProStart program for excelling in this national program and making your community proud.

Mr. Speaker, one of the joys of serving in Congress is the opportunity to be at celebrations such as the one I attended last week during our district work period. The enthusiasm in the room at their celebration was infectious. A special congratulations goes to the four winning students: Emily Haas, Michael Haynes, Justin Byrum, and Eli Bradford. Of course, these accomplishments were facilitated by the support and hard work of Watauga High School ProStart teacher Lee Ann Williams and ProStart mentors Troy and Sandy Byrum of Troy's Restaurant in Boone, as well as David Gronewoller, a Golden Corral executive and owner, who sponsored the ProStart team. Paul M. Stone, Alyssa Barkley, and Susan Seay, who run the Statewide ProStart program, also deserve congratulations for supporting this successful program.